



# SINI 4 Spotlight

Volume 2 Number 1

August 2011

*Welcome, members of the 2011 SINI 4 cohort!* Your membership in this group may not feel deserving of recognition right now, but soon I hope to convince you that the journey you will be taking this year is a worthy one. You, your team, and your staff are being invited to commit to a process that will be hard work, but meaningful work that results in a credible, realistic plan for change that will benefit each and every one of your students. Isn't that our primary goal as professional educators?

This issue focuses on the tasks on your to-do list to get your work underway: establishing a team, ensuring everyone knows their roles and responsibilities for the restructuring planning process, and deciding how to manage the work.

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## Tasks and Timeline for the Restructuring Planning Year

At the May orientation meeting in Concord, you submitted your registration form and should have received a password to access your school's workspace on the *Steps to Success* online tool. Please contact Karen if you need to complete this step ([karenlaba@comcast.net](mailto:karenlaba@comcast.net); [Karen.laba@ed.state.nh.us](mailto:Karen.laba@ed.state.nh.us)).

Many of you followed the advice in the Tasks and Timeline document sent in June and recruited a representative team to lead the planning work for the coming year. Several of you invited me to meet with your team this summer to orient them to the process and help make some decisions about managing the work. I'm sorry I won't be able to meet with all of you and your teams, but I will continue to alert you to updated guidance available on the Department website.



As you move into the school year, here's an abbreviated chart showing Tasks and a general timeline to advise you what to do when:

When	What	How
Fall 2011	Recruit a representative team Schedule Restructuring Team meetings Identify a Process Manager to enter and retrieve information from the online tool	Making Indistar® work for You documents on Center II website
	Review the Steps to Success process with team, staff, and community	SINI 4 Restructuring Planning ppt (NH DOE website)
	Decide how to manage the work	(see next article)
	Process Manager enter team members in Step 3, enter the URL for the state report card on Step 2 (SKIP other entries on Step 2 unless you need typing practice ;-))	VIDEO on Steps dashboard
	Complete Step 4 to assess your current practices against the 82 indicators of effective practice.	VIDEO on Steps Dashboard SINI 4 Spotlight articles, guidance docs
January 2012	Review the priority rankings, do a 'gut check' to identify the key indicators influencing your school's performance;	Guidance documents and webinar
	Begin Step 5: Create a Plan for the Priority indicators you've identified as critical to your student's success	VIDEO on Steps Dashboard SINI 4 Spotlight articles
March 2012	Complete Step 5; DISTRICT schedules a peer review of the plan	SINI 4 Spotlight articles Guidance documents and webinar
April 2012	Communicate the plan with the staff; complete the accessory forms and documents	Guidance docs and webinar SINI 4 Spotlight articles
May 2012	Submit the plan for restructuring to the DOE	Guidance documents

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## Managing the Work

There are many options for managing the work of assessing your school's current practices against indicators of effective practice in the *Steps to Success* tool. Here are some examples:

- 1. Committee of the whole:** small schools, those with fewer than a dozen or so classroom teachers, sometimes choose to complete the assessment phase by meeting as a group, sorting into pairs or trios and dividing the set of indicators among themselves. Once each pair, trio or other small group records its judgment about current level of implementation, and assigns priority and opportunity values, they share with the full group and revise as needed with insights from across the full school community. In some instances, the small administrative team or leadership team completes the whole school indicators while classroom teachers assess the instructional and professional development indicators.
- 2. Delegate assembly:** Many schools recruit representatives from existing teams or work groups to serve on the coordinating council/ restructuring team. These representatives

have an obligation to report back to their constituents and to gather input from those constituents when assessments are completed. Because the greatest benefits come from having as many voices in the discussion of the indicators as possible, representatives are often assigned as facilitators of group meetings in which grade level teams or subject area teams complete the assessment of a selected set of indicators. This presents the opportunity for building leadership skills among the school staff, adding to the school's capacity to improve its performance.

**3. Divide and conquer:** In each of the structures described previously, the set of 82 indicators can be sorted and assigned to subgroups for the assessment step. It's important that each subgroup have a facilitator who ensures everyone understands key terms like 'priority' and 'opportunity.' Practice among the members is essential. When subgroups conduct the assessment, they represent only a small portion of the whole school community. It's important to bring their conclusions to the coordinating team with representatives from all areas of the school for review and corroboration. Remember: the conclusions of the assessment of current practice represent the best judgment of the group responsible for overseeing the development of a plan for change.

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### Responsibilities of Team Members

If you use a delegate team to guide the *Steps to Success* planning year work, each member has responsibility to those s/he represents to communicate team decisions and gather input to bring back to the group from the field. Here's some suggestions on how to carry out that role.

#### **Report to Constituents:**

The benefits of the *Steps to Success* process come from the conversations across the school community about good educational practice. The vision of excellence that emerges from these conversations will guide teachers' and leaders' actions to foster the highest achievement for all students.

Your role as a member of the Restructuring Team includes gathering from your "constituents" -- those whose voice you represent -- their vision of excellence for your school as it reflects on their role at the school. Specifically, you will be asked to commit to setting up two way communication with your colleagues and reporting their input to the Restructuring Team. The outline below gives you an agenda for your BRIEF part of the meeting with the team you represent.

**How often?:** "periodically"

**How long?** Aim to close the discussion after 15 minutes; if you detect that more discussion is needed, set the topic aside, gather any additional information, and schedule time on an upcoming team meeting to complete the topic

**How?**

1. Explain in summary the process you follow to assess an indicator (Step 4).

Recommended highlights = four components of the worksheet (level of implementation; priority; opportunity; evidence for ratings/ conclusions)

\*Consider bringing a sample blank worksheet to give your colleagues

\*\* See your school's Process Manager to access worksheets, reports, etc. as needed \*\*

? WHO is your school's Process Manager? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Share a list of the indicators your subgroup assessed (or one or two you want others to reflect on/ respond to).

\*Some may be curious about the full list of indicators. If they haven't been distributed/ circulated at a general faculty meeting, might be wise to bring a few copies.

3. Distribute the completed worksheet (have the process manager print it off the online system for you) for one or all the indicators you want to discuss with your colleagues.

4. Briefly summarize the discussion your subgroup had around that indicator and the conclusions reached around (a) level of implementation; (b) priority; (c) opportunity and (d) evidence.

5. Ask for feedback.

Do the conclusions agree with your judgments about the practice?

Is there evidence we didn't mention that we should?

Are the priority and opportunity ratings reasonable and realistic?

Should we include this in our improvement plan?

\*Depending on how your colleagues prefer to work, you may want to type up a feedback form and invite teachers to offer their ideas in writing anonymously. Set a deadline and location for their input – don't let it drag on!

### What is 'restructuring'?

As a reminder, especially if you plan to communicate with parents and the school community at the opening of the school year, I'm repeating the definition of restructuring that was in the previous issue of SINI 4 Spotlight.

The term "restructuring" as used in discussions of school accountability refers to dramatic changes that have a high likelihood of leading to improved student academic achievement. The description of restructuring as used in NH is direct and concise:

Restructuring means a major reorganization of a school's governance structure by the LEA that:

- makes fundamental reforms, such as significant changes in the school's staffing and governance, to improve student achievement in the school;
- has substantial promise to improve student academic achievement and enable the school to make AYP as defined by the State's accountability system; and
- is consistent with State law.



The phrase “alternative governance” is used in the state’s definition and in federal guidance and merits attention. “Governance” includes two components – the process by which decisions about the way an organization will accomplish its work are made, AS WELL AS how those decisions are carried out. For schools, this includes decisions about instructional programs including interventions and supports and instructional practices that target student needs.

Think about “dramatic” changes in “governance” to include actions such as ensuring that all staff are working in common to provide learning experiences that serve every student. Consider the “high likelihood” of improved student achievement that can be realized when all staff have the training and support they need to *carry out* the improvement plan and do their best for their students. What a “dramatic” change it can be when teachers collaborate and learn with and from each other to improve their practice!

Keep these key phrases in mind as you move through the assessment phase of your SINI 4/ restructuring planning process. We’ll work together to develop a restructuring plan that includes *fundamental reforms* that build on your strengths and raises the likelihood of student success.

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I hope you find this newsletter helpful. Please contact me if you have suggestions for items to include in a future issue or recommendations for improvement. BE SURE to distribute this to your team members and others who might find this information useful. Thanks!

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[karenlaba@comcast.net](mailto:karenlaba@comcast.net)

**2011 SINI 4: Restructuring Planning Year Schools**

SCHOOL	ADDRESS TOWN/. CITY	Principal	
Hanover Street School	Hanover St. Lebanon	Scott Bouranis	<a href="mailto:sbouranis@sau88.net">sbouranis@sau88.net</a>
Dr Norma W. Crisp Elementary	50 Arlington St. Nashua	Jane Quigley	<a href="mailto:quigleyj@nashua.edu">quigleyj@nashua.edu</a>
Hillside Elementary	183 Hillside Ave. Berlin	Beverly Dupont	<a href="mailto:bdupont@sau3.org">bdupont@sau3.org</a>
Brown Elementary School	190 Norway St. Berlin	Amy Huter	<a href="mailto:ahuter@sau3.org">ahuter@sau3.org</a>
Beaver Meadow	40 Sewalls Falls Road Concord	John W. Forrest	<a href="mailto:jforrest@csd.k12.nh.us">jforrest@csd.k12.nh.us</a>
Rundlett Middle School	South St. Concord	Tom Sica	<a href="mailto:tsica@csd.k12.nh.us">tsica@csd.k12.nh.us</a>
Goshen-Lempster Coop	29 School Road Lempster	Ralph Peterson	<a href="mailto:rpterson@gl.k12.nh.us">rpterson@gl.k12.nh.us</a>
Grinnell Elementary School	6 Grinnell Rd. Derry	Mary Hill	<a href="mailto:mhill@derry.k12.nh.us">mhill@derry.k12.nh.us</a>
Haverhill Coop. MS	175 Morrill Dr N. Haverhill	Brent Walker	<a href="mailto:bwalker@sau23.org">bwalker@sau23.org</a>
Valley View Community School.	79 Thayer Dr. Farmington	Cynthia Sparks	<a href="mailto:csparks@sau61.org">csparks@sau61.org</a>
Franklin Middle School	200 Sanborn St. Franklin	Kevin Barbour	<a href="mailto:kbarbour@sau18.org">kbarbour@sau18.org</a>
Woodman Park School	11 Towle Ave. Dover	Patrick Boodey	<a href="mailto:p.boodey@dover.k12.nh.us">p.boodey@dover.k12.nh.us</a>
Newmarket ES	243 S. Main St. Newmarket	Scott Thompson	<a href="mailto:thompsons@newmarket.k12.nh.us">thompsons@newmarket.k12.nh.us</a>
Armand Dupont School	10 ½ School St. Allentown	Lynn Allen	<a href="mailto:lallen@sau53.org">lallen@sau53.org</a>
Indian River School	45 Royal Rd. Canaan	Kevin Towle	<a href="mailto:ktowle@mascoma.k12.nh.us">ktowle@mascoma.k12.nh.us</a>
Winchester School	85 Parker St. Winchester	James Lewis	<a href="mailto:jlewis@wnhsd.org">jlewis@wnhsd.org</a>
McClelland School	59 Brock St. Rochester	Arlene Walker	<a href="mailto:walker.a@rochesterschools.com">walker.a@rochesterschools.com</a>
Troy School	44 School St Troy, NH	David Dahl	<a href="mailto:ddahl@mrdsd.org">ddahl@mrdsd.org</a>

*(These schools are also SINI 4, but because they will be participating in the 2011 SIG (1003g) program, they will follow a different process.)*

SCHOOL	ADDRESS	TOWN/. CITY
Pittsfield Middle School	23 Oneida Street	Pittsfield
Nute Middle School	22 Elm Street	Milton
Parker Varney	223 James Pollack Dr.	Manchester
Gossler Park	99 Sullivan St.	Manchester
Southside Middle School	140 S. Jewett St.	Manchester